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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1335

INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 0658

RUEHAA/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 0557

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4664

RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 0576

RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 8123

RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 8188

RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0366

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1273

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RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 7701

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 008278

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2026

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MOPS](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: U/S BURNS MEETING WITH INDIAN NSA NARAYANAN

REF: DELHI 8191

Classified By: Charge Geoffrey Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On December 7, Under Secretary Burns and National Security Advisor Narayanan discussed the impending passage of the U.S-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Bill and hopes that a 123 Agreement could be implemented quickly. They agreed that after conclusion of the historic agreement, the U.S. and India should move the bilateral relationship forward in other areas, including: deeper counter terrorism cooperation, Military to Military relations, and democracy promotion. Narayanan said agricultural issues were still "an irritant," noting the Prime Minister's desire for a new Green Revolution. He expressed concern in the wake of the Baker Hamilton Report on Iraq that the U.S. commitment in Afghanistan would waver. "We will stay the course and more," U.S. Burns assured him. End Summary.

IMPLEMENTING HISTORIC CIV NUKE DEAL

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¶2. (C) Under Secretary Burns first outlined the final steps before the U.S-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Bill became law. He noted that although we had not yet seen the Conference Report on the Bill, he and Secretary Rice had been so intimately engaged in negotiation of the language that he was confident it was consistent with the guidelines of the July 18, 2005 and March 2, 2006 Joint Statements. He noted particularly that amendments imposing requirements on the

Indian government had been converted to reports the USG would need to write for Congress. He reaffirmed the U.S. commitment "to meet every obligation, including fuel assurances." Secretary Rice will issue a statement calling the law an historical achievement consistent with our commitments and reaffirming our pledge to honor those commitments. Although India may have concerns about some of the wording, he hoped the GOI, too, would welcome the law.

¶3. (C) NSA Narayanan thanked Under Secretary Burns for the "yeoman's work" which had brought the Civilian Nuclear Initiative to conclusion. He said the Prime Minister had mandated GOI officials to make the deal consistent with the 7/18/05 and 3/2/06 agreements and that both sides want the Bill to pave the way for a satisfactory 123 Agreement. Narayanan said that if the Bill is consistent with "most of the provisions of the two Joint Statements it will probably be okay. We need to manage how this is presented in both the U.S. and India," he said, adding that because the legislature is in session, the Prime Minister or the External Affairs Minister would have to make a statement in Parliament. Because the GOI wants to avoid having to walk back from an initial statement that was "too euphoric," the GOI's first reaction is likely to be "positive but measured," highlighting it as part of the long term strategic relationship of the two countries. We may say we have some concerns and will work with the U.S. on those, he continued. The agreement will be "a victory for democracy," he concluded, noting that this was perhaps the first time in history that two democracies had publicly debated and reached

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agreement on such a sweeping accord.

¶4. (C) Under Secretary Burns urged India to respond to positively to the passage of the bill. He also urged India to send the U.S. a counter-draft of the 123 Agreement. Because the agreement essentially codifies the 3/2/06 Joint Statement, the U.S. hopes it can be completed quickly. Narayanan responded that the GOI wants to see the Agreement implemented during the Bush Administration and commented positively on the "chemistry" between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Bush. The U.S. is also working hard on Nuclear Supply Group partners, Under Secretary Burns said, noting that he had recently raised the issue with China, Japan and Korea. Ireland, Sweden, Norway and Austria will be difficult, but would not stand in the way of the deal, he predicted.

ENHANCED CT, MILITARY AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION COOPERATION

¶5. (S) With the civilian nuclear deal in the implementation phases, Under Secretary Burns said, the U.S. and India should look for ways to deepen other bilateral cooperation. The first step would be to continue the exchange of senior visits, with Secretary Rice hoping to visit India early in ¶2007. He proposed three areas for enhanced cooperation:

--Counter Terrorism: India and the U.S. face a common terrorist threat. The U.S. wants greater cooperation both on the issue of Pakistani-sponsored terrorist groups as well as international terrorism. The next session of the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, tentatively scheduled for late February, will be an important venue for moving forward on joint CT operations, intelligence sharing and other cooperation.

--Mil to Mil relations: The U.S. views India as a strategic partner and that partnership should extend to security cooperation. Burns confirmed the U.S. defense industry is poised to contribute to India's military modernization.

-- Democracy promotion: Under Secretary Burns noted that although the U.S. and India had thus far failed to articulate specific areas for cooperation here, the U.S. hoped that we would be able to move forward with India as an important

partner.

¶6. (C) Narayanan did not comment in detail on the specific proposals, but his initial, half-joking response to the democracy proposal was "after Iraq, not again." Narayanan quoted U.S. Senator Frist saying with the civil nuclear agreement in the implementation phase, "nothing can get in our way!" He noted that Prime Minister Singh had endorsed this view. Agricultural issues are a major concern, he cautioned, noting Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's desire to launch a new Green Revolution. Narayanan noted that he knew newly confirmed Secretary of Defense Gates well from days when they both headed their respective intelligence services.

After the meeting, Narayanan said he was sorry the two principals had not discussed counter terrorism in detail, but looked forward to working together.

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AFGHANISTAN

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¶7. (C/NF) Narayanan called Afghanistan "one area where U.S. and Indian interests converge completely." Narayanan said baldly, "after reading the Baker Hamilton Report on Iraq, we want to know if the U.S. is going to stay the course in Afghanistan." Under Secretary Burns replied emphatically that we will stay the course and more. There is strong bipartisan support for our efforts in Afghanistan." Narayanan said if the U.S. falters in Afghanistan, international jihadists will raise the same cry the Mujahidin had after the Soviet Union was routed there. India does not want to see a country we view as a friend become "almost hostile." Narayanan commented that an extremist government in Kabul would have very negative repercussions in Kashmir as well. He urged the U.S. military to remain committed in Afghanistan for "a reasonable period of time until things stabilize." NATO forces are "not much of a fighting army," he opined.

¶8. (C) While U/S Burns acknowledged continuing concerns about narcotics, corruption and the Karzai government's struggle to extend its writ beyond the capital, he debunked administration critics' charges that the USG had taken its eye off Afghanistan and noted poorly publicized U.S. and NATO successes against the Taliban in Oruzgan, Kandahar and Helmand. He added that there was a strong NATO consensus to add troops in Afghanistan. He urged India to become more engaged in Afghanistan, but acknowledged that Pakistan viewed Afghanistan in relation to India as "a zero sum game."

PAKISTAN

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¶9. (C) Under Secretary Burns said the United States welcomed the India-Pakistan Composite dialogue and wanted to support it behind the scenes. He asked Narayanan his views on President Musharaff's "four point solution" to the Kashmir dispute (reftel). "It strikes us as a sound bite," Narayanan replied. He urged the U.S. to push Pakistan to engage seriously in quiet diplomacy on the issue. If the CT dialogue (the Joint Mechanism which will begin shortly with Additional Secretary K.C. Singh and his Pakistani counterpart) had been announced publicly it would have died, Narayanan said. He reaffirmed that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, more than any previous Indian Prime Minister, is committed to finding a solution for Kashmir. He has done much to change the position of his own National Security Advisor on this score, Narayanan joked, alluding to his personal skepticism about Musharraf's intentions.

¶10. (SBU) Participants: Foreign Secretary * Menon, Joint Secretary for the Americas * Jaishankar, * Saran accompanied

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Narayanan. The U.S. side included Ambassador Mulford, DCM Geoff Pyatt, P Special Assistant Anja Manuel, and S/CT Deputy Coordinator Virginia Palmer (notetaker).

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